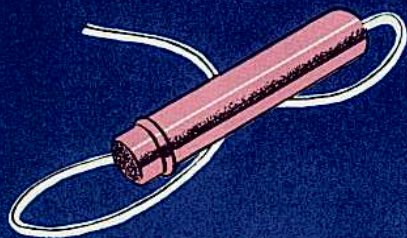




**ELECTRIC  
CAP**



**ELECTRIC  
CAP**



**CAP  
with FUSE**



**FUSE CAP**

If you find a BLASTING CAP  
don't touch it. Tell a policeman  
about it.

# APA-TECH BLASTING CAPS

**CAN  
KILL!**



**DON'T TOUCH  
THEM !**



**Suggested Study-Discussion to Be Used With  
Blasting Cap Safety Poster**

## **BLASTING CAPS ARE DANGEROUS!**

### **THEY KILL, MAIM, AND BLIND CHILDREN!**

Blasting caps sometimes are lost or stolen and boys and girls find them. While playing with these caps, explosions frequently occur, and as a result hundreds have been hurt. Some lose fingers and hands, some are blinded for life. Blasting caps are small copper or aluminum cylinders about as big around as a lead pencil and between 1 inch and 6 inches long. They contain a highly sensitive explosive and are used to explode dynamite, to mine coal and metals, quarry stone, and build bridges, roads, and skyscrapers.

There are two kinds of caps. The "ordinary cap" is exploded by sparks from a burning fuse inserted in one end of the cap. The other kind of cap is an electric blasting cap. It has two wires coming out of one end. These two wires are connected by a very thin wire that is sunk in the explosive charge in the cap. When electric current is applied, the thin wire becomes red hot and detonates the cap.

The explosives in blasting caps are very sensitive, so that they will be sure to detonate the dynamite charge. An experienced person knows how to handle them safely. In the hands of an inexperienced person they are extremely dangerous.

Comparatively few persons know what a blasting cap looks like; children particularly are likely to play with them.

When a cap explodes, hundreds of small pieces of metal fly out in all directions—sometimes as much as 200 feet—and even at that distance could cause blindness.

Boys and girls should know what a blasting cap looks like, and what great damage it can do. If found it should be left alone. Other boys and girls should be warned and a report made to a fireman, policeman, sheriff, or other law enforcement officer. He will dispose of it properly.

Unless officers are **THOROUGHLY EXPERIENCED** in the way to handle such explosives without endangering themselves or others:

1. Get in touch with the county agricultural agent, or local high school vocational agricultural instructor.
2. Call the area headquarters of any major quarrying, mining, or construction project.
3. Contact a representative of the U. S. Bureau of Mines, or
4. Get in touch with a representative of an explosives manufacturer.

**INSTITUTE OF MAKERS OF EXPLOSIVES**  
**250 EAST 43RD STREET** **NEW YORK 17, NEW YORK**



October 1987

# Apa-Tech 56

The 555 Times 56

The Amateur Press Association of General Technics

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The deadline for Apa-Tech 57 is Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup> in San Diego.

**Andy & Annette, Hugh** - please contribute to issue 57 to remain active.

**John Hall, Lee Hart, Roxanne Meida, Steve Salaba, Scott Shields, Kiran Wagle** - please post-mail to this issue to remain active.

**Marty Franz** has been dropped due to lack of activity.

Your account before postage is \$





## Notes from the Chair

Well folks, if you'll take a quick look back to the first page, you'll find some rather depressing news. We currently have 6 members who need to postmail in order to meet minac, 2 who need to contribute to the next issue to meet it, and 1 who has failed to meet it and has been dropped - this after losing a member last month also. In fact we've lost enough members over the last several months that I've lowered the copy count to 25 - and if some of you don't postmail and we're forced to drop you, we'll probably lower it again next month. What's the deal? We had been going strong earlier this year, hearing from some new people as well as keeping a steady stream flowing from all the other members, but suddenly we're back to hearing from only a small percentage of the membership. Is it just summer, with lots of things to do and places to go? Or is there something we need to do to coax the spark back into a flame (if not a roaring bonfire)? C'mon guys (and gals) - let's get this publication rolling again! You can talk to people from across the city and across the globe - what more do you need? Next month be sure to send Greg lots of nice, long contributions - go for it!

GTB

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Summer is drawing to a close. Though daytime temperatures are still in the 80s and 90s, the evenings are cooler, and birds are gathering in great flocks, preparing for their journey south. Because it's been so dry this summer, many trees are already losing their leaves, and you can see hints of red on the hillsides. The hundreds of birds who roost in the trees squabble noisily and their feathers litter the ground beneath the trees. These feathers stick straight up, their quills in the ground, vanes pointing to the sky - they always remind me of little arrows.

All this leaves me feeling a little wistful, so much so that I found my copy of Wind in the Willows and read the "Wayfarers All" chapter. I found that I could identify easily with the opening paragraph: "To all appearance the summer's pomp was still at fullest height, and although in the tilled acres green had given way to gold, though rowans were reddening and the woods were dashed here and there with a tawny fierceness, yet light and warmth and colour were still present in undiminished measure, clean of any chilly premonitions of the passing year. But the constant chorus of the orchards and hedges had shrunk to a casual evensong from a few yet unwearied performers; there was a feeling in the air of change and departure." (I've read that The Wind in the Willows is not really a children's book, but was written more in remembrance of childhood, for adults. I think this paragraph, evocative as it is, points this out.)

As I read Valli's writings in #54, I thought about her description of typical midwestern small towns. Now, Ohio is not the Midwest to anyone except maybe to people from the east. But is Ripley a typical small river town? I don't know, but I do get a feeling occasionally of its being trapped in time. Some of you who've visited here or other river towns may have felt this too. If you go down to the river (in an isolated spot, of course) you can almost imagine that you're Tom Sawyer, especially if one of the riverboats is passing. The Delta Queen and the Mississippi Queen go past once or twice each summer. Sometimes they go to Pittsburgh and back to Cincinnati, sometimes all the way to New Orleans. Occasionally they stop in Ripley, and the passengers disembark to tour the town. It's especially poignant when the boat ponderously pulls away from the shore, the steam calliope playing. This is sort of sad, too, because in the early years of the century, show boats were going up and down the river all the time. This summer, we only saw the Delta Queen once, and it didn't stop in Ripley.

Viewed from the middle of the river, from the Kentucky side, or approaching from Cincinnati on US 52, Ripley presents a very 19th century aspect. It looks like something on a postcard, not real. This is because most of the houses that face the river ARE 19th century relics, little altered, and many of them being restored. In a way, this is just a facade, but behind it, Ripley seems fairly complete. (Unlike my impression of Augusta, Kentucky, another picture postcard town when seen from the Ohio side - behind the

impressive homes on the riverfront is a really meager downtown with lots of vacant commercial buildings and few businesses.) This, of course, is somewhat deceptive, too - Ripley was much more bustling even 25 years ago. Now we have lost a major business - Pepsi - and I don't know what if anything will take its place. Something that strikes home with us even more personally is the loss of the small grocery across the street. It put up a going out of business sign in May, and by July was permanently closed. They auctioned off the remaining merchandise and equipment in August. Once upon a time there was a Krogers in downtown Ripley; now all there is is a carry-out with highly inflated prices.

STARWIND moves apace, albeit slowly. I'm still waiting for a few rewrites, but have all the artwork now except for cartoons and such. Can you imagine I almost yearn for the days when I went to an office and worked an eight-hour day? Though it's true I was prone to dawdling then as well as now, at least I didn't have a thousand things competing for my attention and interrupting my work (the dirty dishes, the floor that needs vacuuming, the laundry that needs putting away, the screaming baby, etc.)! A new activity with us is the Ripley Lions Club. Dave decided it might not be a bad idea to get involved a bit in the community. This idea has its pros and cons, as I had already learned from my involvement in the Women's Club and the historical society. There seem to be two groups in town - newcomers (read foreigners) and old-timers (those who've lived here all their lives, whose parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and sometimes great-greats too, did as well). Old-timers don't trust newcomers, and think that they are generally poking their noses where they don't belong. Hence, it's difficult to get things done sometimes, because it seems sometimes that whatever one suggests gets put down with a "Good heavens, no, that won't work!"

Despite this, the Lions have been rather fun. Unlike the image I always had of Lions (old fuddy-duddies, right?), most of these range in age from 20 to about 60, and they are rather lively. Another image I had of Lions was of staid businessmen. Many of these guys are boilermakers, truck drivers, factory workers, etc. This summer they have flung themselves into three festivals - Fourth of July, Tobacco Festival and Labor Day Festival. They've sold sandwiches, Pepsi and beer at these events, and also sponsored contests (horseshoe and fishing tournaments) and of course games for children.

All this has left all the Lions exhausted. But are they going to rest?! No way! They're planning a Halloween Dance!

Well, it's 9:30 AM, and there is still a little slugabed upstairs. She's supposed to go to the sitters in half an hour; do you think we can make it?!

#### A FEW REMARKS ON #54!

BOB: Marlene insists on doing everything herself, too - this is especially true of crossing the street. "I want to do it MYSELF!" she says. "Don't pull me!" She DEFINITELY amazes us - frequently. She's learned to recognize logos, so she can point out the cartons of Pepsi in the grocery. The other day she pulled a record off the shelf and told me, "This is a Bugs Bunny record!" Actually, it was



the sound-track recording from "The Music Man" but since that was a Warner Brothers movie, the connection is obvious.

Dave and I joked about putting her to work as a stamp lick, but she's graduated to this already. She licks the stamps carefully and sticks them on rather crookedly where I indicate.

She also had a lot of fun earlier this week helping me make some Christmas presents (heavens, is it time to think of Christmas already - awk!). I'd decided that I could make some cheap presents by decorating little woven baskets with dried flowers and ribbons and filling them with potpourri. Though I waited until the baskets were reduced to 35 cents, they really weren't all that cheap. I figure I've put about \$1.50 into each individual basket. But that's neither here nor there - the fun part was watching MR decorate her basket, very exuberantly.

GUY C.: I recently read Ali Mazrui's The Africans. I've gotten really interested in the state of modern African affairs, since the author of two pieces in the upcoming STARWIND are by a man who was born in Africa and lived in the Congo until the 50s. His article about modern Africa got me to doing a lot of research.

VALLI: There used to be a professor at Ohio Northern University whose surname was Beanblossom. It's not just towns that have funny names! I knew a woman (actually the wife of one of my professors) who made a hobby of collecting odd names. Especially those of people whose names and professions were linked (though I don't know if Beanblossom taught botany, it WOULD be appropriate). I wonder if his surname had any influence on Ohio State's Milton Trautman going into ichthyology!

ROD: Your comments about the "space race" are apropos, as this is another topic I'm "into" at the moment, again because of a STARWIND article. I've read Wernher von Braun's book, and still can't get over the fact that if you didn't know better, you'd think he was a VERY MINOR actor in the whole thing! His chapter on "space SF" is fascinating, though - I recognized titles of many of the works Bill Higgins mentioned several months ago.

I scrounged through my collection of NEW SCIENTISTS and pulled out all the issues with space-related cover articles. All these magazines are at least three years old, but still quite timely. (I read a short article about "yellow rain" just the other week in TIME, but I originally read about it in NEW SCIENTIST four years ago! We REALLY MUST resubscribe.)

ROLF: Some Toastmasters clubs have an award called "The Wizard of Ahs" which they present to the member who says "Uh" the most times in his speech (whether prepared or extemporaneous). Fortunately the club I belonged to when I lived in Columbus didn't give out this award, but another club that sometimes hosted ours did - and then I invariably became "The Wizard of Ahs." This is still a habit I've not broken myself of.

ON TO ISSUE 55!

ROD: Marlene has made fast friends with two cats named (brace yourself!) Cutie and Pie. She was quite upset when she tried to talk to them, and they didn't answer her, but now she tells anyone who will listen, "Cats talk kitty talk."

LINDA: Do you suppose the people who received the coffee mugs feel like I did when I won a pair of tickets to "Rigoletto" in a drawing - only to discover that though I'd won them, I still had to pay for them? (Actually, to be fair, I paid the rate for balcony seats, but the tickets were for orchestra seats.) And to top it all off, I couldn't find anybody who wanted to go see "Rigoletto." Not that I blame them, actually. During my career as an adult, I haven't met too many people who are fond of opera. (Dave's first opera was a performance of "Lakme" which he saw with me and my parents - I think it's turned him off opera forever!)

JOA: Thank you for your comments on teas. I recall vividly the scorn some British friends had for orange pekoe - they couldn't understand how we could drink the stuff. Another attitude - a woman I worked with couldn't understand my fondness for Celestial Seasonings teas - "What's wrong with orange pekoe?" she grumbled. Our British friends taught us the "proper" way to make tea (though we never mentioned Earl Grey, from your comments, I am positive that I've frequently brewed it too long). They of course considered their way to be the ONLY way, and that we Americans were in many instances little short of barbarians.

Living in a river town as we do, we can really empathize with you folks over the loss of your books. Though we've never gotten enough water to damage any of our books, a leak in the roof earlier this summer got a lot of Marlene's picture books (which she keep stored in two plastic dish pans on top of her toy shelves). Somehow, we seem to have two of the things that are the most prone to damage in a flood - books and a piano. Though there really hasn't been a flood of consequence for over 10 years, who knows what the future holds?

\*\*\*

Our LaserWriter cartridge is ready for a recharge. I called a place offering a "great recharge deal" only to find out that they'd gone out of business! I read in THE ACTIVE WINDOW awhile back about people decorating ripstop nylon with the LaserWriter for hot air balloon panels. I've not done anything as adventuresome, but I have been trying to manufacture some business cards.

I hesitated to include STARWIND subscription information, but since so many people have expressed interest, here it is. Be well and happy!

*Susannah*



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"Who Walks by Moonlight" by Barb Myers - a rain forest dweller meets one of his gods - or does he?

"From Explorer to Apollo" by James Dorr - a history of U.S. space exploration

"The Other Fellow's Woman" by Allen Byerlee - a fantasy set in 1990's Zaire

"The Crazy Loves of Ray Bradbury" by Sandra Puccio - a profile of and interview with this noted SF author

And much, much more.

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## DR. GONZO'S BITS & PIECES

A NEW LEVEL OF LOW-TECH BY VALI HOSKI  
530 W. WALNUT, KALAMAZOO MI 49007; FOR HT\*56.

### \* \* WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER VACATION \* \*

FOLKS, IT'S STILL SUMMER IN MIAMI; NO MATTER  
WHAT JOA SAYS TO THE CONTRARY. WHAT ELSE DO YOU  
CALL DAYS WITH 30° C.? OTHER FUN THINGS ABOUT  
LIFE IN A STRANGE LAND:

1. LEARNING TO LIVE WITHOUT A TYPEWRITER. MY RELIABLE  
SUN ELECTRIC DIDN'T SURVIVE AIRPORT HANDLING;  
PROBABLY WHEN I GOT STUCK IN MIAMI DURING THE  
GREAT CHARGE FLOOD OF 1987.
2. LEARNING TO WASH CLOTHES WITHOUT A PERMA PRESS CYCLE.  
IRONING SHIRTS, OH, WHAT FUN.
3. LEARNING TO WATCH STAR TREK WITH AN ITALIAN ACCENT.
4. LEARNING TO WRITE SHORT ZINES ON TISSUE PAPER  
TO MINIMIZE AIR MAIL COSTS.

### MAILING COMMENTS ON APATECH 54

BOB RE STAR SCRIPTURE: I FIRST SAW ONE IN A DEPT. STORE  
DISPLAY AND THOUGHT 1. "OHMIGOD, IT'S MAGIC!" AND  
2. "WHERE'S TODD JOHNSON". YOU DESCRIBED IT OK; BUT  
HOW/WHY DOES IT WORK (THE INFAMOUS VALI QUESTION)?

GUY GOOD CT RE THE CRUK. ALSO REMINDS ME OF  
A TRULY ELUSIVE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT: THE  
KLEIN BOTTLE SLIDE TRUMPET. PROBABLY ONLY AVAILABLE  
FROM THE FOLKS AT ISHER...

JOA "THE GODS THEMSELVES" MUST'VE BROUGHT THE RAIN  
INTO OUR STORAGE AREA TO REMIND US OF OUR OWN  
FRAILTY. AND THE FRAILTY OF CHEAP PAPERBACK GLUE. ||  
AS YOU MIGHT HAVE REALIZED - IT'S NAPLES, NOT NEAPLES.

BONNIE BE WOMEN READING ROAD MAPS, ETC.; I COULD TELL THEM A THING OR TWO ABOUT SELECTIVE PERCEPTION OF AND SOCIALIZATION PREJUDICES IN TEACHING SKILLS TO CHILDREN (AND ADULTS.) BUT PERSONALLY, I AM VERY LAZY. IF I HAVE AN EXCUSE NOT TO DO SOMETHING BECAUSE SOMEONE ELSE WILL, I WON'T DO IT. BUT WHEN NECESSARY, I WILL. LIKE: DICK SMITH ALMOST ALWAYS DRIVE & READ THE MAPS, NOT ME; I DIDN'T CARE. BUT NOW (ACTUALLY SINCE '82) I READ MAPS GREAT & LOVE FIGURING OUT HOW TO GET TO PLACES - CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE, ANYWHERE. JOA IS REALLY SLOW IN READING MAPS, HE'D RATHER NAVIGATE BY LANDMARKS. SO I'M THE MAP-READER & NAVIGATOR IN THE FAMILY. || BY THE WAY, I THINK YOU'D LOVE THE QUALITY & DETAIL OF THE ITALIAN TOURING CLUB MAPS AT 1:200,000 SCALE. BEST MAPS I'VE EVER USED OR SEEN - ALMOST EVERY FARMHOUSE/VILLA IS THERE. WELL, AT LEAST EVERY FARM TOWN, ROMAN/ETRUSCAN RUIN, ETC. || THANKS FOR UR, SURVEY TRIP REPORT - VERY INTERESTING.

ROD BE RIVERCROW; I'VE ALWAYS ENJOYED LOUISVILLE - AS A CITY, AS THE '79 NASPIC, AS RIVERCROW. BY ANY CHANCE HAVE YOU MET A LOUISVILLE FAN NAMED JIM PENTEN (HE'S ABOUT 37 NOW, WITH A SON NAMED ADRIAN)? || BE US & SPACE. WE CERTAINLY ARE GOING TO BE LOOKING AT IT A LOT MORE SERIOUSLY NOW DUE TO BERGAN'S EMPHASIS ON SDI & 'STAR WARS' TECHNOLOGY WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS ON MID-RANGE MISSILES. BUT MY HEART STILL RUNS COLD - WE STILL HAVEN'T GROWN UP ENOUGH AS A RACE, JUST GOTTEN BIGGER STINKS, EVEN IF THERE IS 5% SURVIVAL, IT'S NOT WORTH THE RISK. || AH, ARIADNE FINALLY MADE IT!

DP & SW IS FIZZLEVINE THE HOME OF FIZZIES TABLETS?

BARBY WE'VE ALREADY TALKED SO NOT MUCH TO ADD, EXCEPT THAT YOU SHOULD STILL CONSIDER BETHESDA AS ONE OPTION FOR '88. OR ELSE JOA & I WILL FOLLOW YOU SOMEWHERE...

BILL WHAT A CLASSY FORMAT! LOVE YA FOR MY COPY OF WILLY LEY'S BOOK!

POUF A GOOD FRIEND HAD A VOLVO IN GRAD SCHOOL & WAS A REARSLUT ENDSIDE IN MARRIED LIFE. A REVERSE MUPPETS?

DAVID GREAT ILL & STYLE. I WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED WITH BRIGHTEN BUT THEN I ALWAYS KNEW I'D GET IT BETTER



September 1987 page 1 of 4

TECHNOLOGY FOR THE HENSCN

by Joachim Schürmann, KAGWGP

From: via Raffaele de Grada 10, 20125 Milano, ITALY

We are in Milan, Italy now. The typewriter did not survive the trip. Therefore you get to enjoy my handwriting. Calligraphy and fancy pens are a hobby of mine. I trust therefore that you will be able to read my handwriting.

Before it died, the typewriter was an electrical Smith Corona. Now it is only a hunk of metal which makes whirring noises and only occasionally transfers characters on paper.

The typewriter comes in its own case. We checked it with Eastern Airlines from Puerto Rico to Chicago. Then we shipped it via Air Canada inside a suitcase from Windsor (Ont.) to Hamburg (FRG) from where we carried it with us on the train to Milan. We figure that somewhere on this trip the typewriter was shifted through the fifth dimension. Since this device is a strictly four dimensional unit, its time line was disturbed. Thus it now operates in a non linear continuum and its entropy is reversed. Once I figure out how to think in five dimensions I will attempt to repair the unit and remove the dents and abrasions which the multidimensional transition has inflicted upon it.

Time warp...

Milan has not changed much during my absence. Neither has the apartment of my parents, where we are currently staying. My parents were kind enough to reorganize two of their rooms so that we could be at home there. In the rest of the apartment

things are still in exactly the same places where I remember them. Even the fluorescent tube in the kitchen still flickers. I have a feeling that, if I turn around the wrong corner, I am going to be twelve again and Valli will turn into a pumpkin. I do not relish this idea. I did not like to be twelve. I do not like pumpkins. Nor would I like to search for Valli all over again.

Milan is still the healthy city which I remember. Bustling with activity. With excellent public transportation, safe streets and little or no slums. We did quite some traveling around the city recently, all by public transportation and on foot. We had to go through some red tape to make our stay in Milan a legal one. We also looked around for schools and colleges which Valli may attend. I have never been a great navigator, but I managed to show Valli that in this particular labyrinth I find my way around easily: small wonder, landmarks and streets that have been around for the past five hundred years barely changed during my absence.

Valli also discovered that bus drivers in Milan are in reality frustrated race track drivers. During their time off they probably train in Monza. Public transportation vehicles always strive to beat their schedule. The reason is a simple one. Between two runs the drivers have a break. Their supervisors will make sure that they leave on time. If they finish the run earlier, they are going to have a longer break. This is the incentive which makes them very "efficient" drivers.

### Land of the Tardi...

Yes, we have been there too, at Conspiracy 87, in that funny land where each town has its very own Tardi (or is it Tardusses?) and the cars have steering wheels on the passenger side. We enjoyed our stay immensely.

However, we spent very little time at the convention. In fact, we liked to see other things too and, let's be honest, how can a convention compare to, for example, the Roman terms in Bath or High Tea at Fortnum and Mason's or simply shopping at Harrod's? Well, it just doesn't. Therefore we paid our obligatory visit to the Huchster's room, attended the Hugo Awards, had dinner with known and unknown friends and then did some traveling on our own.

I had not been to Brighton before. I liked it. It reminded me much of resort areas at the Baltic coast where I used to spend some time in my youth. The weather was about the same too: in fact it was cold although the sun was shining. British people seemed to think that the weather was great and happily went swimming. I have northern genes too, but I am probably spoiled by Puerto Rico: I was not tempted to go for a swim; I hardly removed my sweater. Velli's comment was very much to the point: "If this is August around here, I hate to think what the winter looks like." I'll make sure that we are in Italy by then.

### Think of it as the Eurotube...

This is the slogan of the British advertising campaign for the tunnel between Great Britain and the continent. It comes with a picture



September 1997 page 4 of 4

TECHNOLOGY FOR THE MENSCH

by Joachim Schürmann, KASV6P

that shows the schema of the London tube (i.e. subway) system: same colour and same general outline of the lines. But a closer look reveals that the names of the stations are names of European cities, not London streets. So for example we might have a "Circle line" that stretches from Vienna to Paris. Besides good advertising, I think this is a great idea to promote the European concepts in general and European trains in particular.

We used the "Eurotube" a lot and at this point we can certify that it works quite well. The density of the net allows to go almost anywhere by train and the service is generally at least above average. Italian trains have improved too. I am not saying that they are on time now. Late trains in Italy are a cultural issue which has nothing to do with scheduling. But ticketing is now EDP based and on-line. In many stations train arrivals, departures, delays, and track assignments are displayed on video monitors and electronic boards. This beats listening to (and missing) announcements through loudspeaker.

While we were traveling, the Eurotube had a problem too: the Gotthard line through Switzerland was interrupted. No major complaint, but still, quite unfortunate: we had a lot of luggage.

More news next time about ourselves and also about our teas, hopefully in Courier Elite and not in chicken scratching.

See you around  
Joachim

TRANSPORTER  
TOPICS

Rodford E. Smith  
730 Cline St.  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
(502) 227-7741

Number 50

I am in the process of stripping the wallpaper in my front bedroom. I bought some of that stuff you put on old wallpaper to dissolve the glue and peel the paper off easily, only to discover that it wouldn't soak through the four or five layers of paint on top of the four or five layers of paper. My house was built in 1940, during a time when people papered every year or so, whether it needed it or not. They even papered the ceiling! I'm glad the floor is carpeted. Meanwhile, my waterbed is in the living room and the other displaced furniture in the back bedroom (which is too full of books, magazines and my comic collection to hold the waterbed and the rest of the junk).

I spent two days in a class recently, learning how to write "more effective reports and memos." I also had an unintended lesson in the problems technical people have in getting correct information into a non-technical publication. One of our assignments was to break into groups and write a report describing the appearance and function of a paperclip. As the only engineer in our group I did most of the describing. The problem was that in the short time available I couldn't convince the guy who had assumed command that we should use the word "friction" in telling how the thing worked. He insisted that it was the pressure of the spring which kept the paper from falling out. In a way he was right, since it was the pressure exerted on the paper by the clip caused the friction, but I couldn't convince him that the difference was important. A small matter, yes, but illustrative. \*

Lexfa, the lexington SF & F club, is planning its first convention for some time next year. It will be a Star Trek con, sponsored by a local TV station. I will be helping, probably with Security (already, he capitalizes the word). My best suggestion to date has been that we show "Forbidden Planet" as one of the non-Trek movies. The name of the convention will either be "Con-Far" or "Lexicon". Even though the last is already in use there is enough distance, both geographical and with respect to subject matter, that we shouldn't get into trouble.

At work we are currently in the process of microfilming much of our old files. This means a lot of work, since it involves nearly ten thousand maps and over a hundred fifty thousand sheets of 8 & 1/2 by 11 paper. We have also just bought a microfilm viewer/printer, so we can still use the material after disposing





of the originals. Unfortunately, my boss doesn't seem to want to get rid of the historical data. When I asked him about how we should handle it, he just said to wait and make sure that the microfilm was readable.

The newest part of the Frankfort Connector will run very close to my house. In fact, part of the plans call for the street I live on to be extended to US421, which runs perpendicular to the connector. Two new bridges will cross the KY river and provide much needed access to downtown. This arrangement will make it a lot easier for me to get in and out of Bellepoint, my subdivision. The Connector itself will make it a lot quicker for me to get to work, assuming I am still employed at the same place or nearby by the time the road is finished.

Has anyone heard if MarCon has solved their hotel woes? At RiverCon it was announced that the hotel they had contracted with had closed. I sent my membership in anyway.

#### Mailing Comments

##### Postmailing

Dave-El : I had your postmailing in time to comment on it lastish; unfortunately, I couldn't find it when typing my contribution. \* Concerning your trip to Europe: we'll have to get together some day and bore each other with our photos. \*

##### Issue 55

Cover: Yer warped, kid. \*

Mostly Mailing: Thanks for the map. \* Re. K. F.'s cmnts. Joa: I love people who take advantage of loopholes. \* Which fictional universe would I want to live in? That's a toughie. H. Beam Piper's SF universe is pretty interesting, especially during the early era of exploration. Heinlein's is pretty good, too, especially if you are a Howard and can live long enough to see a lot of it. (As my great uncle Woody said, "Most people don't stay alive long enough to find out whether they like it or not.") I also like the "Magnus, Robot Fighter" universe, if you will include comic books. A related question for you roll players is what RPG universe would you like to live in? \*

Me: My friend with the boat works at the UK Med Center (at the University of Kentucky). I've got to improve my proof reading.\*

Linda: Maybe the deer food vendors carry hanks of lion hair.  
\*

RTG Franking: Thanks. This was very interesting. I assume it was from Greg \*



Technology: Congratulations on your license. \* Have you tried sassafras tea? Interesting tang to it. I also like Red Zinger herbal tea. Neither of these, of course, are "real" teas. \* My condolences on the flooding of your stored items. This is probably too late to help you, but after the '78 flood the state used microwave ovens to dry flooded documents. They bought several, on the recommendation of an archivist consultant. \*

#### End Mailing Comments

Robbery: An announcement was made over the intercom at work recently that the police were in the parking lot with a man they had caught taking things from cars. He was an older man, apparently crazy. Many of the items he had taken were literally junk. He had also made a written list of the license plate number of each car he had taken something from. This was all done in broad daylight near a busy city street.

Star Trek: I watched the pilot for the new series the other day. Pretty good, although the plot reminded me of "The Squire of Gothos Meets the Miners of Stratos" with better special effects. The preview of the first regular episode seems very similar to the show from the original series where they find the happy water. You remember; a research station is found with the life support system cut off and all of the crew dead, most frozen but some murdered in bizarre ways. The culprit turns out to be a form of water which acts much like alcohol and can be passed from person to person. Is this copying intentional, to make fans feel at home? Or are they really having the creative problems I have heard about?

why do people say "turrent"  
instead of "turret"?

chr supplement;  
Rod Smith





Guy Wicker

The Copper Country Berserker, held in Houghton was a big success. Many people doubted that anyone would want to drive 500 miles or more, but 35 people did it. About 20 locals also attended various berserker activities. Everyone's comment at the end included "do it again!", although some people would prefer to only have to make the drive every other year. I think I'll hold it again next summer and see how it goes. One big influence was the advertising. It seems most people need a flier and a couple of phone calls to get sufficiently motivated for such an event.

The big events at the berserker were fireworks, explosives, and hydrogen. Side activities included tourism, camping, copper rock hunting, berry picking, superconductive levitation, beach parties, waterfall coloring, and searching for mythical walls (it was there 10 years ago, really!).

The hydrogen ballooning failed to lift anyone off the ground. While there was enough hydrogen, the seam leakage of the balloons was excessive. A stiff breeze that picked up before the flight attempt didn't help. We had fun with the balloons, anyway. Visibility of well over 50 miles let everyone in the Copper Country in on the UFO experiment. My parents are still hearing stories. An airplane flew over Traprock about 30 minutes after launch and it's still not clear if it was a spotter plane for the SAC radar base 20 miles from the farm. How much of a radar image does 800 square feet of aluminum foil make, anyway? Hydrogen isn't nearly as dangerous as the bad press a certain "disaster" has given it. We had significant problems getting the stuff to blow up. I finally wound up reversing a vacuum cleaner and mixing it with a lot of air. Even then the rockets exploding around it had a hard time.

Tullio was impressed enough with the U.P. to suggest that GT buy some land there so we have a place to experiment. At \$15 per acre for non-swampy land it is a possibility. Often you can find a place with a house on it for not too much more. There were farms up there a few decades ago, but it is difficult to farm there and farming is difficult enough as it is. This left a lot of farmhouses with property that nobody wants.

Recently John Lussmyer brought something to my attention that piqued my interest in buying U.P. land. An air shelter dome, the kind of portable inflatable building used for storage, is being sold to the highest bidder as military surplus. It is 860 X 140 X 50 feet in size. At Phoenix, there is an experimental terrarium of human proportions that has just started up. A lot of people at NASFIC went to see it. I think artificial environments are going to become a big thing in the near future and we could be pioneers in the field! All the advantages of the U.P. but no snow on our 3 acres!

I just made a job shift at ECD. I'm no longer a manager! I'm in a general research category which I'm trying to shape into something I can use for getting a PhD in Electrical Engineering or Physics. My first responsibility is to direct the amorphous transistor research. With luck, and a few major breakthroughs, this will translate directly into Josephson junction transistor fabrication. Nobody has done anything with these superconducting things yet; they're all too busy trying to figure out why they work. It's an opportunity to actually do something useful before the great wave hits.

## MAILING COMMENTS:

KIRAN -

Send me your font! In the interest of maintaining whatever credibility ECD has, I decline to comment on the Ovshinsky superconductivity theory except that, for whatever reason, William Lipscomb endorses it and Edward Teller doesn't snicker anymore when it's mentioned.

BOB T.-

Techie gamers do strange things in designing their worlds. I'm trying to work out the foundation for a Techie call of Cthulhu run. It would include 1987 real life people finding their way back to Lovecraft's 1923. The fun of such a situation is rapidly quenched when the horrible realities of Cthulhu's takeover become evident. The key to succeeding is to first convince people and obtain enough power to do something, then to advance 1920's technology sufficiently to achieve your ends. I'm working on the rules for making technical achievements in a more primitive world. There's a lot more to it than providing the idea and having their engineers implement it.

GREG -

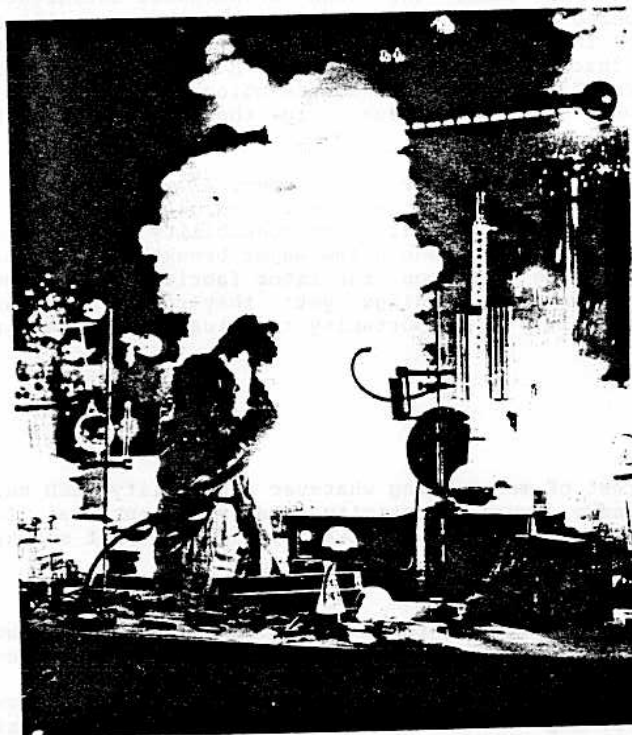
News of things at work: ECD gains credibility as more companies successfully make higher temperature superconductors by using fluorine; it seems that surface phenomenon are responsible for the high temperature effect; surface effects may also be responsible for the high currents observed by IBM and NTT, meaning that the critical current could theoretically be BILLIONS OF AMPS PER SQUARE CENTIMETER!; I got a patent filed with William Lipscomb on making the materials stable using passivation coatings, but we haven't stabilized anything at over 100 Kelvin yet; ECD's film development is as advanced as IBM's; it looks like a major Japanese company will fund our research.

DONNA -

Nuclear Monopoly is much faster than Monopoly because the board gets smaller as the game progresses - about 2-3 hours. 3 to 6 players can play. I'll bring it to Isher. Next year's Isherfund can be for an indoor jacuzzi and swimming pool. Judging by how crowded it's gotten there recently, though, I'm sure you couldn't fit it anywhere, let alone all the guests.

ANDY & ANNETTE - Congratulations and good luck at grad school!

**Some jobs are more stressful than others.**





# ON THE ROAD AGAIN

an APA-TECH zine from BARRY GEHM

*Le gros blanc nord.*

As I write this (in longhand, later to be converted to legibility by the miracle of word processing), I'm in Ste. Foy, Quebec. I've spent much of the past two days with an attractive young French-Vietnamese lady. Unfortunately, all that time was spent in a biochemistry laboratory. Besides which, she's married. Some things never change.

I'm in Quebec to do some experiments. More accurately, I'm watching while the aforementioned young lady actually does the work. I've brought some samples of the enzyme I've been working with to be tested for calmodulin, a regulatory protein. The procedure used is called a radioimmunoassay, and is only moderately complicated to do once the materials are in hand, but setting up for it from square one is both complicated and time-consuming. This lab, which is run by a friend of my advisor's, does the procedure routinely. Although we could have just mailed the samples up, we decided that one of us should go along to deal with any questions or problems that might come up. Since the data may be going into my thesis, and I prepared the samples, I was chosen to go. It's been a nice trip. I should apologise to Bonnie for my snide remarks about her department-sponsored junkets, but I won't. So there.

Ste. Foy is a suburb of Quebec City, the provincial capital. I came through Montreal, but all I saw was the airport. I understand Montreal is quite a city, but if you like history, Quebec City probably has it beat. The original walls and fortifications of the old city are still standing, and even in use (a ceremonial regiment is garrisoned at the old fort). Old cannons still point out over the St. Lawrence river. You can walk around the Plains of Abraham where French and English battled for control of the city. The English won, but it doesn't seem to have taken.

The city has a very French flavor (as far as the feeling of someone who's never been to France counts), not just in the language, but also the appearance of the buildings and the people. The people I've met (mostly from the lab) have been very friendly, and very good-natured about my almost complete lack of French. (So as not to be an Ugly American, I have been making an effort to pick up what I can while I'm here, but I didn't have any time to study in advance.) I have even gotten some compliments on my pronunciation. Quite different from the usual reception of tourists in France, as I understand it. I recommend this place!

*In the land of the free (plus \$2.95 postage and handling).*

I've been roving over a fair amount of native soil as well. For starters, as indicated in my last zine, I have moved. My new address is 2417 Kerry St., Apt. 2, Lansing, MI 48912. My phone number is (517) 487-0911. The Biochemistry Department address and phone number are still good.

The day before I left for Quebec, I went to Ann Arbor to deliver a seminar at U. of M. and interview with two labs that are interested in having me join them as a post-doctoral researcher. (I'd have to choose one of the two). The seminar and the interviews went pretty well. It appears I can have either job if I want it. A few days after I got back from Quebec, I drove to Chicago and interviewed for a post-doctoral position at U. of C. I was also offered that position. Now I have to make up my mind. The Chicago folks I visited with while I was there (Bill H., Bill L., Sam & Keith) were pretty good about not twisting my arm, but Chicago has its attractions. So does AA, but most of the techies there seem to be moving out. Lee Hart has left, Chris and Cecille are planning on moving to the Upper Peninsula, and Tom Snoblen is talking about moving to Detroit to be closer to his job. Still, the important criterion has to be which place offers the better career opportunity, and I have to think about it. But it's nice to be wanted. I've even been turning away potential employers who got my name from a placement service I registered with. Now the only problem is getting finished by the end of the year.

*To boldly go where we have already gone before.*

I caught the 2-hour open episode of Star Trek: the Next Generation. I was optimistic, having been encouraged by the involvement of Gene Roddenberry, Harve Bennet, and D. C. Fontana in the new enterprise (:-), but I was mostly disappointed. Living aside minor quibbles (e. g., having families and children on board gives an unpleasant aroma of Battlestar Galactica; the sets, especially the bridge, are just too damn roomy, etc.) the most disturbing problem is that they are already borrowing story ideas from old episodes. The 1st episode had two plot lines (one and a half, really) cobbled together to give enough story for 2 hours (one and a half, really). The framing plot-line was an obvious reworking of "The Squire of Gothos"; the other was less obviously derivative, though it owed something to "The Devil in the Dark"; it could probably have been developed into an intelligible story if more attention had been paid to logic and dramatic unity and less to showing off the entire new crew and ship in the first episode. Judging from the previews, next week's episode is an even more transparent reworking of the episode where some microbe makes everybody go party-crazy and turn the air-conditioning way down so they freeze. I forget the title, but I remember the plot. So does everyone else, I'm sure. Look, Gene, new episodes need new stories. Reruns we already got.

No time for mailing comments again, alas. Maybe next time.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

## So You Want to See Some Fireworks, eh?

An Apa-Tech contribution for issue #56. Totally to blame is Donna Proni, who lives at 530 West Walnut Street, in Kalamzoo, Michigan. To speak to me (or perhaps my machine) call (616) 342-4967.

.....

Well, I had hopes of catching up on all the latest news, as well as writing loads of mailing comments.....and then the dream ended and cruel reality took over. I've been really busy lately - between Alex wanting me to work at least three days a week on a regular basis, Lee moving in, rearranging several rooms in my house (due to Lee moving in), conventions and social events galore - it's been a little hectic around here. But I really wanted to write up a beserker report on the Houghton bash, and with this issues cover being what it is, there's not going to be a better time (besides it was 2 months ago already).

Thursday night Tullio and I drove to East Lansing where we stayed with Barry for the night. Scott Shields also rendezvoused there, so we could convoy up in the morning. Friday morning Kathy (I don't know her last name - she's a friend of Bonnie's from MSU) also drove by and we loaded up the three cars, putting our cargo carrier on top of Barry's car. Tullio rode with Scott and I rode with Barry, catching up on all the latest news and excitement. After a few hours (when we needed to stop for gas while the other two cars still had 1/2 to 3/4 full tanks) we realized that the cargo carrier was an enormous drag. Kathy has a station wagon, so we managed to get the carrier off of Barry's car and into Kathy's. It worked fine, and we took off. When I lived in Chicago, I never really realized how far Houghton really was - it's a long drive. We reached the campground around 10:00 PM, only to find that someone had already accepted our campsite. Since everyone who was sharing our site was with us, we were a little concerned. Then we found out that this person had accepted everyone's site - "oh, well that's OK then". I don't think the ranger understood us very well...

Tullio and I had set up our tent a few nights before just to be sure the two of us could do it alone. We did it in about 15 minutes. But now, all of our friends were right here to help us. It took about ten people and an hour. But we got set up and then headed off to the party we had heard rumors of. We got into the general vicinity, then stopped where all the other cars were. Then we followed the sounds of explosions. Unfortunately, Guy had just finished setting off all the fireworks he had brought with him. Fortunately, Tullio and I had brought some of our own. But rather than just set them all off, we decided to do some scientific research. We had stopped in Tennessee on the way back from WeaponsCon in Atlanta to pick up some good fireworks - the problem was that we didn't really know what most of them did, or if they were any good. So we systematically set them off, carefully noting their name and serial number as well as the effect they produced. Then we rated it on the ooh-ahh scale. This hopefully will bring you less duds at Ishercon.

Saturday morning we went to a waterfall (yep - a waterfall - right there in Michigan - I never would've guessed) which had been fed some flouricine dye. The water looked really green when it was lying in pools, but coming down the fall it was only a slight tinge. But it was really beautiful looking down the falls and into the ravine. This of course, was also the big day for hydrogen ballooning. I missed all of the attempts to get Guy airborne, (I stayed back at the camp with Connie to watch Rachel) but I arrived in time for the feast of pasties and the explosions. Boy were there explosions. I don't have any idea of how much dynamite we used, but there were many explosions. For those of you who don't know the whole scoop - don't call the guys in the white coats quite yet. The person who provided, set up, and detonated all the explosions does that kind of thing for a living, so he knew what he was doing. We also had a lot of balloons left over from the unsuccessful attempts at flying. Some of them were set free with an aluminum foil streamer, but a lot of them entered the endangered species list. People started shooting bottle rockets at the full balloons. It was amazingly unspectacular. The first balloon had at least ten bottle rockets inside of it (as in they went in one side of the bag, didn't make it through the other



side, and exploded inside) and it still wouldn't explode. Trust Tullio to come prepared - of course - use bigger rockets. Well it finally went up, but it was very unsatisfying - no colorful burst of flame, and only a slight "whumph". Well, we couldn't have that, no could we? Guy started mixing oxygen in with a vacuum cleaner blowing in air. The flames gained some color, and "whumph" got better, too.. It was really was kinda neat.

Sunday we toured a copper mine (that's where the cover came from, by the way - they were in a box labeled "take one", so I asked if I could get about thirty. She said fine - they'd been sitting there for years), then went to a mill where there happened to be a couple of locomotives parked which we of course climbed all over. Next we headed up to the Keewenaw peninsula where there was a park on the lake which had sentimental memories for all the PFRers. We debated what to do about dinner, and Barry held out for waiting till we got back to camp to have a cookout (which we somehow hadn't done yet). We got back (after a quick trip up a waterfall visible from the road which everyone just **had** to stop at) and started a fire. Barry made some wonderful chili, Connie made some stirfry and rice, and everyone finished up with S'mores. Tullio had some flare material which he threw by handfuls into the fire causing it to glow a bright red. He must have decided that he didn't want to bring it back, but that he had too much to throw by handfuls - Todd and I were trying to do some star gazing when we saw a huge bright red glow down on the beach - someone had set up a volcano of flare powder. It lasted a while then burned down again, with apparently noone the wiser. Well, we wandered back toward the camp and began saying our good-byes. Some of the folks would be leaving early enough that we might not see them in the morning.

Next day we packed up and headed back. This time Tullio, Barry and I were in one car - Kathy had left earlier in the weekend, and Scott convoyed with the Trembley's since they were leaving earlier in the morning. We were told to stop for sweet rolls at the Hilltop Restaurant, so we stopped there and ate breakfast - what a mistake. Not that there was anything wrong with the food mind you, but we got our sweet roll as desert - we should have gotten it as breakfast. These things were **huge**. Imagine if you will a cinnamon roll covered with icing. Now multiply its size by at least ten. It was good, but I barely ate a quarter of it. And many hours later we were back in East Lansing. A few hours after that we were back in Kalamazoo.

Now you should realize that I've only hit the really high points in this story, due to lack of time - there were also walks on the beach, singing of songs, more explosions and fireworks, lots of good friends and good food, and a whole lot of **fun**. When's the next one Guy?

Donna

